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## Inductive Studies in the Acts.

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### THE PRIMITIVE ERA OF CHRISTIANITY.

AS RECORDED IN THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

30-63 A. D.

#### SEC. 19. PAUL'S THIRD EVANGELIZING TOUR.

Acts 18:23—21:16.

55-58 A. D.

Asia Minor, Illyricum, Greece.

##### I. STUDY OF THE FACTS.

Let the following subclassification of the material in this section be verified, corrected, or improved:

- Par. 1. 18:23, Revisitation of the Churches of the First Tour.
- Par. 2. 18:24-28, The Work of Apollos in Ephesus and Corinth.
- Par. 3. 19:1-7, Paul Gives Christian Baptism to Certain Ephesians.
- Par. 4. 19:8-20, Two Years of Ministry and Teaching in Ephesus.
- Par. 5. 19:21, 22, Paul's Plans for Future Work.
- Par. 6. 19:23-41, Uprising of the Ephesian Tradesmen against Paul.
- Par. 7. 20:1-6, Revisitation of the Churches in Greece.
- Par. 8. 20:7-12, Incidents of Paul's Week in Troas.
- Par. 9. 20:13-16, Paul Journeys toward Jerusalem.
- Par. 10. 20:17-35, Paul's Address to the Ephesian Elders.
- Par. 11. 20:36-38, The Departure from Miletus.
- Par. 12. 20:1-16, Paul Insists on Going to Jerusalem.

1. Prepare a concise abstract of the material contained in this section, noting the chief facts and recounting them in your own language.
2. Write out a careful paraphrase of Paul's address to the Ephesian elders (20:17-35), reproducing as exactly as possible the thought and spirit of the text.

3. Observe the itinerary of the third evangelizing tour, and the kind of work done: (1) Revisitation in Galatia (the territory of the first tour), occupying perhaps one or two months. (2) New work in Ephesus, occupying between two and three years. (3) Revisitation in Macedonia and Achaia, occupying more than three months. (4) Return from Corinth to Jerusalem, by way of Macedonia, Troas, Miletus, Tyre, and Cæsarea, occupying about two months. (5) The Epistle to the Galatians was probably written from Antioch in the year 54 A. D., some little time before the third evangelizing tour was begun. (6) Three epistles still extant were written on this journey, First Corinthians in the spring of 57 A. D., from Ephesus; Second Corinthians in the summer of 57 A. D., from Macedonia; Romans in the spring of 58 A. D., from Corinth. (7) Definite mention is made (1 Cor. 5:9) of a letter not now extant, written to the church at Corinth previous to our canonical First Corinthians.

## II. TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION.

1. *Paul's plan for the third evangelizing tour.*—Where was Paul between the second and third tours? Consider the probability, on the South-Galatian hypothesis, that the epistle to the Galatians was written at Antioch in this period. In what year did Paul set out on his third tour? Was he alone at the beginning? What churches did he first revisit? What is meant (Acts 18:23) by "the region of Galatia and Phrygia"? What important district did he now intend to evangelize (Acts 16:6; 18:21)? Trace upon the map Paul's journey from Antioch of Syria to Ephesus. Was the evangelization of Asia from Ephesus the main purpose and work of the third tour? Did he also plan work in Illyricum (Rom. 15:19, locate upon the map) and revisitation of the churches in Greece? Was it a part of Paul's plan also to visit Rome and even territory still farther west (Acts 19:21; Rom. 15:19, 23)?

2. *Apollos' work in Ephesus and Corinth.*—When did Apollos come to Ephesus, from where, and why? Is anything known of his career previous to this time? Ascertain something about the life, education, and type of Judaism of the Alexandrian Jews. What had been the character of Apollos' religious and intellectual training? Consider his two greatest qualifications as a religious teacher, eloquence and learning in the Jewish Scriptures (Acts 18:24). How much did he know about Jesus? Why did he not know the full gospel story? What was taught him by Aquila and Priscilla? Who were they, and whence had they their Christian instruction? What did Apollos' readiness to receive

their teaching indicate as to his character? Why did he wish to leave Ephesus and preach in Achaia? What special work did he do (Acts 18:27, 28)? Consider his labors and influence in Corinth (1 Cor. 1:12; 2:4; 3:4-10); was his work here among Jews or Gentiles? Was he personally responsible for the actions of the "Apollon" faction in the Corinthian church?

3. *Johannine and Christian baptism*.—What was the significance of this rite as used by John the Baptist (Matt. 3:6; Acts 19:4)? Why had Jesus received it (Matt. 3:13-16)? What did John himself say of his baptism as compared with that of the coming Messiah (Matt. 3:11)? Did Jesus personally practice baptism after he began his ministry in Galilee? Why did the disciples of Christ afterward use this rite (Matt. 28:19)? Were these "certain disciples" (Acts 19:2) at Ephesus converts of Apollon's preaching? Why did they not know of the giving of the Holy Spirit? Explain what is meant thereby. What was the difference between the baptism of John and the baptism "into the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19:5)? Explain the Holy Spirit manifestations of tongue-speaking and prophesying (Acts 19:6, cf. 1 Cor. 14:1-19).

4. *Paul's long ministry in Ephesus*.—Locate Ephesus upon the map and ascertain all you can as to its size, the nationalities of its inhabitants, its political, commercial, and social characteristics, and the kinds and condition of religion and morals found there in Paul's time. Among what class did Paul work during the first three months in this city? Had he previously been invited to do so (Acts 18:19-21)? What results attended his work for the Jews? How did Jewish opposition to the gospel after a time manifest itself? Did the Jews make Paul trouble during his subsequent period of work in Ephesus (Acts 20:19)? With reference to this consider the whole address in Acts 20:17-35. After Paul withdrew from his work among the Jews in the synagogue, where and how did he carry on his gospel teaching? What was the "school of Tyrannus" (Acts 19:9), why did Paul teach there, and what was the relation, if any, of his work to Tyrannus' work? Who would gather to receive instruction from Paul at this place — Gentiles or Jews, or both, and in what numbers? How long did this daily instruction continue? Had Paul previously done any teaching that was so regular, systematic, and prolonged? What did Paul accomplish by this period of work? Was Christianity spread from Ephesus throughout the province of Asia (Acts 19:10)?

5. *Incidents of the work in Ephesus*.—Explain the nature of the handkerchief and apron cures mentioned in Acts 19:12 (cf. Acts 5:12—

16). What was the divine purpose of these miracles? Explain the incident of the Jewish exorcists recorded in Acts 19:13-16 (*cf.* Acts 8:4-24; 13:4-12). Was this humiliating defeat of the sons of Sceva providentially appointed to overthrow their false work? How did the failure of these Jewish exorcists affect the attitude of the people toward Paul and his teaching? What were these books of the "curious arts" (Acts 19:19) which were burned? Explain the significance of this victory of Christianity over paganism.

6. *Paul's plans for future work.*—Consider Paul's plans for future activity as set forth in Acts 19:21. What is the meaning of the phrase (Acts 19:21) "purposed in the spirit"? Why did he send two of his fellow-workers on ahead into Macedonia? How much longer did he himself stay in Ephesus (*cf.* 1 Cor. 16:8, 9)? Why had Paul been for a long time (Rom. 1:13; 15:23) eager to visit Rome? What district still farther west did he have in mind to evangelize (Rom. 15:23, 24, 28)? Whither was he going, however, before he visited Rome and Spain (Acts 19:21; Rom. 15:25)? What were Paul's reasons for going to Jerusalem at this time (Rom. 15:25, 28)? Observe that 1 Corinthians was written from Ephesus in the spring of 57 A. D., not long before Paul's departure from Ephesus for the fulfilment of his plans to visit Macedonia, Achaia, Jerusalem, Rome, and Spain. Did this plan provide for the evangelization of the entire western world as then known? Why did Paul choose to spread the gospel in the western rather than in the eastern world? Was the eastern world evangelized in the apostolic age? if so, by whom?

7. *The uprising of the Ephesian tradesmen.*—Consider the close resemblance between this uprising at Ephesus and the previous one at Philippi (Acts 16:12, 16-24). Are these the only two instances recorded in Acts where the Gentiles were the instigators of the opposition to Christianity? Did money interests lie at the bottom of both troubles? What business was Demetrius in, and how many were associated with him in the trade? Who used the little "shrines" that were made, and for what purpose? Consider the address of Demetrius to the tradesman (Acts 19:25-27) as to its shrewdness and ability. How correct and how effective were his two arguments against Paul, that Christianity was ruining their business, and that the worship of Diana was being overthrown? Why did the populace gather in the theater? Of what nationality were Gaius and Aristarchus, and why were they seized? Why did Paul wish to go before the crowd? Who restrained him from so doing, and why? What action was taken by the "chief

officers" of Asia to protect Paul? Why were they friendly to him? What was the idea of the Jews in having Alexander address the populace? Why would they not hear him? Note carefully the four arguments used by the "town clerk" (Acts 19:35-40) in quieting the disturbance. Was his purpose to defend Christianity, or to restore order? What was the result of this uprising as regarded Christianity in Ephesus and the surrounding country?

8. *Revisitation in Macedonia and Achaia.*—In what year, and at what season of the year, did Paul set out on this portion of his third tour (1 Cor. 16:8)? Was the uprising of the tradesmen a cause or the cause of his leaving Ephesus? At what point in Asia did he stop, and for what reasons (2 Cor. 2:12, 13)? Where did Paul at last find Titus (2 Cor. 7:5, 6)? What places in Macedonia would Paul, of course, revisit at this time? Was it from one of these places, perhaps Philippi, that Paul wrote 2 Corinthians, in the summer of 57 A. D.? Why does the Acts give no account (Acts 20:2, 3) of Paul's work in Macedonia and Achaia on this journey? Was it at this time that Paul went to Illyricum, west and north of Macedonia, and preached the gospel (Rom. 15:19)? How long was Paul's stay in Achaia, probably at Corinth (Acts 20:3; 1 Cor. 16:5, 6)? What was the plot laid against Paul by the Jews there? What change of plans for the journey to Jerusalem was made to thwart this plot? Was it just before Paul left Corinth at this time, early in 58 A. D., that he wrote the epistle to the Romans? Trace upon the map this revisitation journey from Ephesus to Corinth.

9. *Paul's fellow-workers on this tour.*—Did Paul start out from Antioch on his third tour alone (*cf.* Acts 13:2-5; 15:36-40; 18:23)? Read through the material of this section (Acts 18:23—21:16) to see who became his principal companions in the work of this tour. Consider the work of Timothy (Acts 19:22; 20:4; Rom. 16:21; 1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10; 2 Cor. 1:1). Consider the work of Titus (2 Cor. 2:12, 13; 7:5-16; 8:16-24; 12:18). When was Luke with Paul on this journey, as indicated by the "we" passages, Acts 20:5—21:16? Consider the work of Apollos, Aquila, and Priscilla (Acts 18:26-28; 1 Cor. 16:12, 19). Also of Aristarchus, Tychicus, Trophimus, Erastus, Gaius, Sosthenes, and others (*cf.* Acts 19:29; 20:4; 1 Cor. 16:15-17; Rom. 16:21-23). What is thus indicated as to the character and methods of Paul's missionary activities? What as to the progress of the gospel?

10. *The return journey from Corinth to Jerusalem.*—Trace upon the

map Paul's journey from Corinth to Jerusalem, by way of Philippi, Troas, Miletus, Tyre, Ptolemais, and Cæsarea. In what year, and at what time of the year, did Paul take this journey, and why? Indicate at what places on this journey stops were made, and what time was spent at each. Why are the details of the latter part of the journey given at such length? Can the approximate number of days consumed in going from Corinth to Jerusalem be ascertained (Acts 20: 6, 13-15; 21: 4, 7, 15)? How came Paul to stay a week at Troas? Is the farewell meeting there mentioned to introduce the account of the miracle worked by Paul on that occasion? Recount the accident to Eutychus and his restoration to life. Why is this incident given such prominence? Why did Paul stop at Miletus, when he had not wished to take time to stop at Ephesus (Acts 20: 16, 17)? How far was Miletus from Ephesus, and in what direction? What was the reason for Paul's haste on this journey (Acts 20: 16)? Why did he wish to be at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost? Why is the time of the stay at Cæsarea so indefinitely noted? Was the journey overland from Cæsarea to Jerusalem? What was the distance and the nature of the travel? With whom did they lodge at Jerusalem, and why?

11. *Sunday observance among the primitive Christians.*—With reference to this, consider carefully Acts 20: 7. Why was this meeting on the first day of the week? What was the purpose of the gathering? For other mention in the New Testament of the first day of the week see 1 Cor. 16: 22; Rev. 1: 10. When does Sunday observance by the Christians first become explicitly noted (see Justin Martyr, *Apology I*)? Is the growth of this custom to be explained as a commemoration of Christ's resurrection on the first day of the week, and as the meeting of a need for some day to be observed by the Gentile Christians, who had no Sabbath? If this was the origin of Sunday observance by the Christians, is it probable that the custom began very early, even immediately after the resurrection of Christ? Does the comparative silence of New Testament literature and the earliest patristic writings with reference to Sunday observance determine that there was nothing of this kind in the first century, or can that silence be reasonably explained? What was the nature of the first-century Sunday observance—commemoration and religious worship? Was it not until later that Sunday became specifically a day of rest, after the manner of the Jewish Sabbath? Did the Jewish Christians continue to observe the Sabbath, making Sunday observance an additional Christian feature of the week? Had Christ given any instruction that Sunday should be

observed by his disciples instead of the Sabbath? Was it practicable to observe both days; if not, which would survive among the Christians, who were predominantly Gentiles? Was the change from Sabbath to Sunday observance in keeping with Christ's teaching and practice? Was this Sunday observance arranged or enjoined by the apostles? Consider carefully and explain Paul's teaching on the subject (Rom. 14:5; Gal. 4:9-11; Col. 2:16, 17). Is the Christian Sunday holier than the other days of the week? Does it matter which day of the week is observed, except for the practical value of uniformity? Why have a special religious day? In what does its proper observance consist?

12. *Paul's address to the Ephesian elders.*—Prepare an analysis of this address (Acts 20:18-35), for which the following may serve as a suggestion: (1) retrospective portion, vss. 18-21; (2) prospective for Paul, vss. 22-27; (3) prospective for the Ephesian church, vss. 28-31; (4) parting benediction, vss. 32-35. Why has the historian given so full an account of this address? Are we to suppose that it is reproduced verbatim, or that only an abstract is given? Consider its contents for thought and language peculiarly Pauline? Investigate, if possible, the textual and theological problem involved in the phrase (vs. 28) "the church of God." Consider the chief points of teaching contained in Paul's words on this occasion. What are the characteristics of the address? Compare with previous recorded addresses of Paul (Acts 13, 22, 26). Whence did Paul obtain the precious saying of Jesus used at the close of verse 35? Do we find, elsewhere in the New Testament, outside of the gospels, any other quotations of Jesus' utterances? Are there extra-biblical sayings of Christ in subsequent Christian writings which may be regarded as authentic?

13. *Predictions of impending trouble for Paul.*—Had Paul feared when he left Corinth that his mission to Jerusalem would bring him trouble (*cf.* Rom. 15:31)? Had this fear become a definite expectation by the time that he reached Miletus (*cf.* Acts 20:22, 23)? What was his attitude toward this dark future (*cf.* Acts 20:24)? Not knowing the details of the pending trouble, why did Paul think that he would no more see the Ephesian Christians (Acts 20:25)? On the view that there was a release of Paul in 63 A. D. and a subsequent imprisonment in 65 A. D., is it not altogether probable that he did visit Ephesus again (*cf.* Phile. 22; 1 Tim. 1:3; 2 Tim. 4:13, 20), and how then would his misconception at this time be explained? What is the meaning of the phrase (Acts 21:4) "through the spirit"? How was it that



the Christians of Tyre could "through the spirit" advise Paul not to go to Jerusalem, when he regarded that as his duty? Did Philip's daughters at Cæsarea predict the coming trouble to Paul (Acts 21:9)? Had Agabus (*cf.* Acts 11:27, 28) come from Judea for the purpose of giving Paul this warning (Acts 21:10, 11)? What was his message? Did he advise Paul not to go to Jerusalem? Consider the impressive symbolism which Agabus used in giving his prediction. Compare the similar acts of the Old Testament prophets, 1 Kings 22:11; Isa. 20:3; Jer. 13:5-11; 19:10, 11; 27:2; Ezek. 4:1-3; 5:1-4; and elsewhere. What was the purpose of warning Paul beforehand of this trouble—to prevent his going to Jerusalem, or to prepare him for what was to come? Why did Paul's companions and friends plead with him not to go to Jerusalem (*cf.* Matt. 16:21-23)? What was Paul's reply to their pleadings (Acts 21:13, 14)? Was it in fact Paul's duty to go? if so, why?

### III. OBSERVATIONS AND TEACHINGS.

1. *Organization*.—No mention is made in the history or the literature of the third missionary journey of the Christian organization, aside from the fact that the elders of the Ephesian church are referred to.—Deacons are not spoken of, though there may have been such officers.—The Ephesian elders (or presbyters) were also called bishops (Acts 20:17, 28), which indicates that these three names were used of the same office in the churches at this time.—The term "church" is commonly employed to denote the local body of believers in any place, so that the plural form of the word is frequent, *e. g.*, Rom. 16:4, 16; 1 Cor. 7:17; 11:16; 14:33, 34; 16:1, 19; Gal. 1:2, 22.—But "church" is also used in the singular, though less frequently, to denote the whole body of Christian believers everywhere, *e. g.*, Acts 9:31; 20:28; 1 Cor. 10:32; 15:9; Gal. 1:13.

2. *Environment*.—The Ephesian Jews were comparatively tolerant, and Paul worked longer among them than was his usual experience, but they became his bitter enemies and persecutors.—The gospel successfully overcame the Jewish exorcism and heathen magic which had had a firm hold in Ephesus.—Only twice in Paul's recorded experience did opposition to him originate with the Gentiles; once at Philippi on the second tour, and once at Ephesus on this third tour; the cause in both cases was the financial loss brought upon certain persons through the spread of the gospel.—But at Ephesus Paul was befriended and protected from the populace by the political officers of the Roman province.

3. *Institutions*.—From the meeting at Troas on the first day of the week and from the reference in 1 Cor. 16:2, it may be inferred that Sunday was at this time observed by the Christians as their especial day of worship, commemorative of Christ's resurrection on that day.—The Sabbath, however, continued to be observed in addition by the Jewish Christians in the Jewish way, this being a part of their former religious life which they had not yet outgrown.—The "breaking of bread" at Troas is to be understood as meaning the Lord's Supper; and extended reference is also made to this rite in 1 Cor. 11:17-34.—The baptism into the name of Jesus was contrasted with the baptism of John, which was a preparatory rite, a pledge of repentance, and a symbol of initiation into the kingdom of the Messiah of God; while Christian baptism was an acknowledgment of, belief in, and self-committal to Jesus Christ, which acknowledgment seems to have been attended in the apostolic era with the bestowal of the extraordinary gifts of tongue-speaking and prophesying.

4. *Belief and teaching*.—The only address or sermon of Paul recorded on this tour was that to the Ephesian elders, in which he directed their attention to the faithful, lowly, and successful ministry which he had served among them (Acts 20:19-21, 26, 27, 31, 33-35), and exhorted them to continue in his footsteps.—The epistles which Paul wrote upon this tour are his greatest, and contain the main body of his teaching as it has come down to us.

5. *Daily life*.—Paul had a large number of fellow-workers with him at various points in his tour; some were Gentiles, some were Hellenists; the most prominent among them were Timothy and Titus.—Apollos, who was a learned and eloquent Jew from Alexandria, became a most efficient Christian evangelist.—In Ephesus Paul gave daily instruction in the gospel for two years, a more systematic period of teaching than is recorded of him elsewhere.—In Paul's epistles to the Corinthians we see portrayed much of the daily life of one of Paul's greatest churches, a life by no means ideal or perfect, and yet reflecting the glory, exaltation, and power of the Christian religion.

6. *Divine guidance*.—Paul's third evangelizing tour was in the main a long period of work in Asia at Ephesus, where he had desired to labor on the second tour, but had then been providentially directed into Macedonia.—By his work at Ephesus he had established the gospel widely and permanently in the whole province of Asia.—Paul's divinely inspired purpose embraced the entire evangelization of the

civilized world west of Palestine, including Greece, Italy, and Spain.—Paul went to Jerusalem in 58 A. D. under the leading of the Spirit, conscious of and prepared for the impending trouble, setting aside the protests of his friends and advisers.

*Literature.*—Upon this section see the commentaries on Acts, especially those of GLOAG, HACKETT, MEYER, and the CAMBRIDGE BIBLE. Also NEANDER, *Planting and Training of the Christian Church*, Vol. I, pp. 215–301; FARRAR, *Life and Work of St. Paul*, chaps. 31–40a; CONYBEARE AND HOWSON, *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, chaps. 13–20; STIFLER, *Introduction to the Book of Acts*, secs. xv, xvi; RAMSAY, *St. Paul the Traveler*, pp. 269–303; *Church in the Roman Empire*, pp. 90–168; WEIZSÄCKER, *Apostolic Age of the Christian Church*, Vol. I, pp. 303–405; BIBLE DICTIONARY, articles Agabus, Alexander, Alexandria, Apollos, Aquila, Aristarchus, Artemis, Asiarchs, Baptism, Demetrius, Ephesus, Eutychus, Exorcism, John (the Baptist), Luke, Magic, Priscilla, Rome, Timothy, Titus, Troas, Trophimus, Tyrannus, Tychicus.